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ABSTRACT

Following a brief discussion of the use of the flannel board as a teaching aid in the elementary school, this paper lists and describes 29 journal articles and book chapters that provide information on using flannel boards. The publications cited offer suggestions for making flannel boards, tell how to use them in storytelling activities, and provide ideas for specific stories that may be told with the aid of the flannel board. Three relevant films are also described. (GW)

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Flannel Boards---Back to the Basics in Audiovisual Materials, too.

Ina Robertson

"Back to the basics" are key words in education this season and teachers looking for basics in audiovisual materials would do well to consider the flannel board for classroom use. Sometimes overlooked because of its simplicity, the flannel board is an excellent teaching aid for every subject. With no moving parts to break down or wear out, no bulbs to replace, no electrical energy required and so simple even a child can operate it, the flannel board should be standard equipment in every classroom.

The flannel board is inexpensive to construct and can be made in virtually any size or shape. The inner lids of cigar boxes may be covered with flannel and every child in the room may have an individual board complete with storage for felt pieces. Every teacher may have a board eliminating the need to share or schedule specific time use as is often necessary with more elaborate machinery.

Construction of flannel boards for the entire school would be an excellent volunteer project for parents. Few tools would be required and purchasing supplies in quantity might make costs even lower. If wood is to be used, lumber yards frequently cut to size and fabric shops often allow discounts for school purchases of felt or flannel. Volunteers could even use the teachers lounge to complete the flannel board since fastening the fabric to the board is the only work required---a quiet operation with little expertise required.

To start such a volunteer project, one of the films on flannel

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boards might be shown at a parent-teacher meeting, followed by a skillful presentation using the flannel board as a storytelling device. Children might demonstrate the use of the flannel board in a math, science, music or social studies lesson.

School library-media centers may want to have a supply of smaller flannel boards available to check-out to students for home use. Pictures and felt pieces to manipulate on the board could be provided and instructions could be included to encourage parents to assist children in creating their own manipulatives. Materials could be suggested which would adhere to the board.

The flannel board has been used to enhance instruction for many years. It may be known as a felt board, flannelgram, magic board, felt-o-gram, story-o-graph, flanagram, or cloth board but regardless of the name, it's a basic tool and should be in every classroom and used by every student and teacher.

Anderson, Paul S. Storytelling With the Flannel Board, Book 1. Minneapolis: Denison, 1963.

This complete manual for flannel board users begins with guidelines for the storyteller and instructions for making the board. Thirty-four stories, classified as beginning, traditional and modern are given. Patterns for the characters and scenery accompany each story. Also included are fourteen stories selected for speech practice and a bibliography for storytellers.

Brown, James W.; Lewis, Richard B.; and Harcleroad, Fred F. AV Instruction Technology, Media, and Methods. Fifth ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1977), 498 p.

Under the heading, "Cloth Boards," in the chapter, "Displaying and Some Fundamentals of Visual Communication," the authors

discuss an improved material for better adherence of items to cloth boards. "...Objects backed with the hook material and displayed on these Hook-N'-Loop boards will not slip or change positions until they are firmly pulled away." (p. 91.) Illustrated directions for constructing cloth boards and using them effectively with conventional fabrics are included. A classified directory of supply sources is given.

Crowe, Eileen. "Making and Using a Flannel Board." Elementary English, April, 1975, p. 520-522.

After a brief history of the flannel board, the author presents various methods of constructing the board. Rationale and suggestions for using flannel boards with children, ideas for preparation of materials to be used on the boards and storage of materials are discussed. Bibliography is also included.

Dent, Charles H. and Tiemann, Ernest F. Felt Boards for Teaching (University of Texas, Visual Instruction Bureau, Division of Extension, 1955), 26 p.

In an easy-to-read format, using photographs and cartoon-like drawings, the authors cover all aspects of the felt board. Construction, lists of materials which adhere to the board, tips on program presentations and illustrative uses for the classroom are included. Practical suggestions are given to encourage teacher use.

Dover, B. E. "Teach Concepts With Felt." Instructor, November, 1968, p. 39.

At the kindergarten level, the felt board can be a prime teaching device used to activate the perceptual senses of seeing, hearing and touching. Five-year old children have shown almost total recall of stories presented with the felt board. Folk tales

from ethnic groups such as Eskimos and Indians can be skillfully presented by teachers and students when they share in setting the scene and controlling the action of the story on the felt board. Specific suggestions for using three ethnic tales are given.

Farrow, Esther, "The Flannel Board in My First Grade," Instructor, June 1957, p. 29-30.

Motivation problems in first grade may be solved when the flannel board is incorporated into learning activities. Ideas for using the flannel board in teaching left-to-right progression, likenesses and differences, concepts of whole and parts, and number sequences are given. The visual and kinesthetic appeal of the flannel board makes learning easier and more enjoyable, according to the author.

Ford, M. L. "Individual Felt Boards," Instructor, October, 1966. p. 32.

An individual felt board for each child in the classroom may be used to stress following directions, left-to-right orientation, sequence, numeral sets and patterns. Boards constructed of heavy cardboard, covered with light blue flannel, 16" x 10" may be stored with appropriate felt shapes in hosiery boxes.

Grassell, E. M. "Effective Flannel Boards," Educational Screen and AV Guide, March, 1958, p. 130-131.

Photographs illustrate the flexibility of the flannel board in introducing items in a systematic order. Rearrangement, manipulation, and animation of flannel board cut-outs in various content areas of the school curriculum are shown. Materials that adhere readily to the flannel board are listed.

. "Flannel Boards in Action," Educational Screen and Audio-Visual Guide, Summer, 1955, p. 250-251.

Black and white photographs are used to illustrate the flannel board in action in several subject areas at the high school level. Suggestions are given for flannel board construction and use in driver, health and physical education, drama, music, chemistry, social studies, English and biology classes.

. "Flannel Boards in Elementary Schools," Instructor, May, 1956, p. 91.

Teachers are encouraged to construct flannel boards from a wide variety of materials for classroom use. The textured (reverse) side of Masonite, plywood or cardboard covered with felt or flannel or flock-coated hardboard may be used. Neutral-colored backgrounds permit more variety in colors of display figures. Permanent markings may be made with India inks, felt-nib pens, china marking pencils and crayons.

Huck, Charlotte S. Children's Literature in the Elementary School. New York: Holt, 1976.

The author feels that some tales are more suitable for felt boards than others and suggested titles for visual presentation are given. Advantages of using felt boards with children are discussed and using flannel board figures on the overhead projector to create a story in silhouettes is recommended.

Kmiecik, R. M. "Walking Sticks; Flannel Board Story." Instructor, January, 1968, p. 30.

Six little sticks go walking and introduce children to various shapes as they become a square, a triangle, a rectangle and other figures. The round sun and oval mud puddle are included in the story for shapes which are not possible to make with the six

straight walking sticks.

Manning, Doris S. "The Handy Flannelboard," Grade Teacher, October, 1958, p. 26.

"Use a towel carton in tent form and cover with flannelette dyed a soft green. On one side sketch a simple farm scene with crayons" and you have one of the "most versatile aids for use in a primary class"---a homemade flannelboard. With specific suggestions for using the flannelboard in arithmetic and reading instruction, the author presents ideas for sources of pictures and storage tips.

May, Marion E. "Elephant Parade; Flannel Math." Instructor, December 1969, p. 35.

"You can make it easier for young children to see the relevance of math if you dramatize stories containing fundamental concepts on the flannel board," states the author. The elephant family in the zoo parades and performs for visiting school children and the flannel-board figures illustrate size, quantity, position and direction as the story progresses. Designed for early primary groups, the children should enjoy retelling the story and reinforcing the concepts.

. "Flannel-Board Race." Instructor, January, 1971, p. 42.

"The reality and use of math become apparent to the young child as appropriate objects are placed on the flannel board." In this short, short story Bobby and Billie race to the big tree and illustrate the mathematical concept--"a straight line is always the shortest way to go."

. "Witch Seeks Cat; Halloween Flannel-Board Story." Instructor, October, 1967, p. 43.

"One night, just before Halloween, the big yellow moon floated in the sky above three dark trees. One little grey cat walked into the woods. He passed the first tree. He passed the second tree. He walked to the third tree and stopped beside it."

This simple, short flannel board story uses quantative concepts with a Halloween theme. Felt shapes for sets of cats of various colors, three trees and a witch are required for the story designed for early elementary or pre-school children.

National Audubon Society. 6 Flannel Board Bulletins. New York: National Audubon Society, nd.

The set of six nature stories for the flannel board includes full-size patterns and stories about thunderstorms, back yard ecology, an Indian legend on trees which illustrates conservation, balance of nature, food chains and man's dependence on nature. The leaflets have complete directions for making the board, short bibliographies and suggestions for follow-up activities.

Write to: Educational Services, National Audubon Society, 950 Third Ave., New York, N.Y., 10022 for price.

Nations, Betti and White, Jennet. "Experiment With Textures." Instructor, February, 1971.

Flannel boards for preschool-kindergarten classrooms may be white or colored terry-cloth (towels) taped at the children's eye level. Figures to adhere to the towels are selected and cut according to color and texture of other materials. Rough drapery fabric may become a dog; vinyl wallpaper may be used for story characters; and polyfoam may be painted with tempera for flowers.

Letters of the alphabet and numbers may be formed from pipe-cleaners.

Osborn, Merton B. The Flannel Board. Redlands, California: By the Author, Box 3, 1956.

An early pamphlet with separate chapters devoted to the flannel board and definition, history, construction, preparation of materials, use in storytelling, use in primary and middle grades, and use in high school and college classes. The final chapter discusses the board and religious education and suggests uses for Bible stories, object lessons, memory work, map study and biographies. Photographic illustrations are used throughout.

Paladino, Helen. "Pollution! A Flannel-Board Story." Instructor, March, 1974, p. 117.

Very young children may become aware of pollution with this flannel-board story of the deterioration of a community park and its pond. When a factory is built on the outskirts of town, air pollution, added population and careless disposal of garbage threaten to destroy the park and pond before the townspeople are alerted to the problems and agree to restore them to their natural beauty. Flannel-board pieces required for presentation are indicated in heavy black type in the story narrative.

Pennington, L. B. "For Your Flannel Board." Instructor, June, 1959, p. 45.

"Sea Song" by Marchutte Chute is an excellent poem for flannel board use. With felt pieces copied, enlarged and constructed using the illustrations in the book, Around and About by Marchutte Chute (Dutton, 1957), children will enjoy reading or reciting the poem and manipulating the figures. The complete

pcem and actions for the felt figures are included.

Ross, Ramon Royal. "Frannie and Frank and the Flannelboard." Reading Teacher, October, 1973, p. 43-7.

The flannel board can be used to teach reading to children who do not read or who do not believe they can read. The author gives step-by-step guidance and details his experiences telling stories and encouraging children who are problem readers to use the flannel board after writing and reading their original stories. According to Ross, "In reading instruction, the flannelboard exposes a new dimension."

. Storytelling. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill, 19 .

Stating that the flannel board is at one and the same time, the most exasperating and the most stimulating of the media a storyteller may use, the author devotes an entire chapter to the flannel board and storytelling. Indoor-outdoor carpeting is suggested for the board replacing flannel but bright felt is recommended for the story figures. Unusual materials such as steel wool, cotton, leather, yarn, buttons, dried weeds and ferns are recommended for added dimensions. The Indian folk tale, "The Tiger, the Brahman, and the Jackal" is presented with instructions for preparation and telling.

Sands, Lester B. "Flannel Boards," Grade Teacher, February, 1957, p. 62, 106.

"This audio-visual device allows both teacher and pupils to use imagination and ingenuity to bring subject matter to life... The flannel board, like other educational aids, is usually more effective when co-ordinated with other methods of teaching." The author suggests using the flannel board with filmstrips, opaque

projections, chalkboard illustrations and duplicated materials. Pictures from books and magazines as well as newspapers may be used for attractive displays. Examples of using the flannel board in arithmetic, language, social living, science, music, art, health and physical education are given. The significance of the flannel board as an instructional aid, according to the author, lies in the magical imagination of the teacher who uses it.

Scuorzo, Herbert E. "Fun With Flannel Board," Grade Teacher, April, 1966, p. 91; 137-38.

Still described as flannel boards, many new materials are being used in their construction. Boards made of steel, plastic, and special man-made fabrics add versatility to this instructional aid. Magnetic boards which require the use of small magnets and plastic boards which hold materials through static charge are two of the newer boards discussed. Instructions for covering the board with flannel using heat-sensitive photo-mounting tissue are given. Adhesive-backed flexible magnetic tape for displaying cutouts is recommended.

Thomson, Hazel M. "Mrs. Gooses's Party," Grade Teacher, February, 1968, p. 140-142.

A flannel board story poem to help young children understand the importance of counting correctly. In the play, Mrs. Goose gets no ice cream when she is unable to count her guests correctly. Children will sympathize with her when she laments, "At my own party! No ice cream! I can't have this again! Before I have another, I must learn to count to ten!" Illustrations for suggested cut-outs are included.

Wagner, Joseph Anthony, and Smith, Robert W. Teacher's Guide to Storytelling. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown, 1958.

In the chapter, "Visual Aids for Storytelling," the authors list values children may derive from flannel board stories and contrast flannel board use with other creative activities. Procedures for making and using the board are clearly presented. Eleven stories, suitable for use with the flannelboard are included with suggestions for pictures to be used. Science story on frogs includes full page patterns of eggs, tadpoles in various stages of growth and frogs.

Waller, Bessie. "Let's Dust Off Our Flannelgraphs," Grade Teacher, March, 1957, p. 32, 74, 86.

An elementary school teacher discusses the virtues of the flannel board in her first grade classroom. Using the board to make teaching more concrete, more meaningful and more of a lasting experience than mere words can ever do, she gives practical suggestions for board use in reading, story telling, math and social studies activities.

Williams, Catharine. How to Make and Use the Felt Board (Columbus, Ohio: Bureau of Educational Research, Ohio State University, 1956), 26 p.

Written as supplementary notes to accompany a filmstrip on the flannel board, this pamphlet is a complete source of information. One of the few references to include a brief history of the felt board, the author has chapters on: uses of the felt board, types and preparation of accessories and judging materials designed for felt board use. In the chapter, "Types of Felt Boards," directions for wall, easel, table, lap and folding boards are given. Illustrations make the directions easy to follow.

Films

Feltboard in Teaching*

"Describes the construction of a feltboard and demonstrates its various uses in the classroom. Shows samples of commercially available felt cutouts and gives directions for using pictures cut from magazines. Summarizes the advantages of the feltboard such as its portability, low cost, flexibility, and versatility. (Color, 10 minutes.)"

Flannelboards and How to Use Them*

"Demonstrates a variety of ways to construct and use a flannelboard. Points out many types of material suitable for use on the flannelboard, and shows how to prepare many special types. Illustrates the use of flannelboards in a number of subject areas from kindergarten to college level. (Color, 15 minutes.)"

Flannelgraph*

"A teacher-demonstrator explains to a class of prospective teachers the uses of the flannelgraph and the materials involved. She shows many unique applications, such as in reading, arithmetic, art, health and music. Then shows her utilizing the flannelgraph with a class of children and their reactions during and following a story. Ends with the children actually preparing their own flannelgraph materials. (Color, 27 minutes.)"

*1976-1979 Education Films Catalog, University of Illinois Visual Aids Service, Urbana, Illinois, 61801.